

Appln. No. 09/785,700  
Amdt. dated Apr. 11, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 10, 2004  
Docket No. 6169-156

IBM Docket No. BOC9-2000-0017

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the instant application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method of providing promotional material to consumers comprising:

a merchant computer system generating a merchant request to stimulate commerce for at least one merchant specified product;

establishing a computer communications session between [[ a ]] the merchant computer system and a third-party remote shopping stimulation system, wherein the merchant request is conveyed to the third-party remote shopping stimulation system;

said third-party remote shopping stimulation system reading consumer purchase information from said merchant computer system, said consumer purchase information comprising consumer identifying information and product information;

based at least in part on said consumer purchase information, identifying one or more potential consumers of one or more products the at least one merchant specified product;

in said third-party remote shopping stimulation system, associating said promotional material corresponding to said at least one merchant specified product one or more products with said identified consumers; and

making said promotional material available to said identified consumers using a promotional material delivery system.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, said identifying step further comprising determining a product consumption rate from said consumer purchase information to identify said one or more potential consumers of the at least one merchant

Appln. No. 09/735,700  
Amdt. dated Apr. 11, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 10, 2004  
Docket No. 6169-156

IBM Docket No. BOC9-2000-0017

specified product, wherein the product consumption rate is used to determine that a previously purchased product is due to be replaced or upgraded, one or more products and offering said one or more consumers equivalent, but different products.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said promotional material and said consumer purchase information include person to person transactions and Internet-based transactions.

~~wherein said step of reading consumer purchase information is responsive to a merchant request.~~

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein each said step is performed responsive to the merchant system detecting a business necessity in an inventory management system, wherein said business necessity is at least one of an associated merchant having excess inventory and an associated merchant experiencing a revenue shortfall.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said consumer purchase information is read from a purchase history database comprising consumer purchase information for a plurality of different merchants, and wherein the third-party remote shopping stimulation system responds to merchant requests from said plurality of different merchants.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said at least one merchant specified products ~~one or more products~~ include services.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, said product information comprising product expiration information and product identifying information, wherein

Appln. No. 09/785,700  
Amdt. dated Apr. 11, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 10, 2004  
Docket No. 6169-156

IBM Docket No. BOC9-2000-0017

said step of identifying one or more potential consumers of products is based upon the expiration information of products.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said promotional material made available to said identified consumers is in electronic format.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said promotional material made available to said identified consumers is in printed format.

10. (Currently Amended) A system for providing promotional material to consumers comprising:

a plurality of merchant computer systems each configured to generate a merchant request to stimulate commerce for at least one merchant specified product;

a shopping stimulation logic unit for identifying one or more potential consumers of the at least one merchant specified product one or more products in response to received requests from said merchant computer systems, and for identifying a business necessity, wherein said shopping stimulation logic unit is disposed in a third-party computer system that is remote from a merchant and consumer computer system; [[and,]]

a promotional information database, accessible by said shopping stimulation logic unit, for storing promotional information relating to said at least one merchant specified product one or more products, wherein said promotional information database includes promotional information for a plurality of different merchants[[ . ]]; and,

a promotional material delivery system configured to make said promotional material available to said identified consumers.

Appln. No. 09/785,700  
Amdt. dated Apr. 11, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 10, 2004  
Docket No. 6165-156

IBM Docket No. BOC9-2000-0017

11. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
a consumer purchase information data structure for storing consumer identifying information and product information corresponding to a purchase transaction.
12. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
a commerce system for collecting said consumer purchase information in a computer communications network environment.
13. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
a point of sale system for collecting said consumer purchase information from in store and Internet purchases.
14. (Original) The system of claim 10, further comprising:  
a merchant inventory management system for interfacing with said shopping stimulation logic unit.
15. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 10, wherein said business necessity is at least one of an associated merchant having excess inventor and an associated merchant experiencing a revenue shortfall.  
~~further comprising: a delivery system for delivering promotional material associated with said one or more products to said one or more consumers.~~
16. (Currently Amended) A machine readable storage, having stored thereon a computer program having a plurality of code sections executable by a machine for causing the machine to perform the steps of:  
a merchant computer system generating a merchant request to stimulate commerce for at least one merchant specified product;

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Amdt. dated Apr. 11, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 10, 2004  
Docket No. 6169-156

IBM Docket No. BOC9-2000-0017

establishing a computer communications session between [[ a ]] the merchant computer system and a third-party remote shopping stimulation system, wherein the merchant request is conveyed to the third-party remote shopping stimulation system;

said third-party remote shopping stimulation system reading consumer purchase information from said merchant computer system, said consumer purchase information comprising consumer identifying information and product information;

based at least in part on said consumer purchase information, identifying one or more potential consumers of one or more products the at least one merchant specified product;

in said third-party remote shopping stimulation system, associating said promotional material corresponding to said at least one merchant specified product one or more products; with said identified consumers; and

making said promotional material available to said identified consumers using a promotional material delivery system.

17. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 16, said identifying step further comprising determining a product consumption rate from said consumer purchase information to identify said one or more potential consumers of the at least one merchant specified product, wherein the product consumption rate is used to determine that a previously purchased product is due to be replaced or upgraded, one or more products and offering said one or more consumers equivalent, but different products

18. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said promotional material and said consumer purchase information include person to person transactions and Internet-based transactions.  
wherein said step of reading consumer purchase information is responsive to a merchant request.

Appln. No. 09/785,700  
Amdt. dated Apr. 11, 2005  
Reply to Office Action of Dec. 10, 2004  
Docket No. 6165-156

IBM Docket No. BOC9-2000-0017

19. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein each said step is performed responsive to the merchant system detecting a business necessity in an inventory management system, wherein said business necessity is at least one of an associated merchant having excess inventor and an associated merchant experiencing a revenue shortfall.

20. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said consumer purchase information is read from a purchase history database comprising consumer purchase information for a plurality of different merchants, and wherein the third-party remote shopping stimulation system responds to merchant requests from said plurality of different merchants.

21. (Currently Amended) The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said at least one merchant specified products one or more products include services.

22. (Previously Presented) The machine readable storage of claim 16, said product information comprising product expiration information and product identifying information, wherein said step of identifying one or more potential consumers of products is based upon the expiration information of products.

23. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said promotional material made available to said identified consumers is in electronic format.

24. (Original) The machine readable storage of claim 16, wherein said promotional material made available to said identified consumers is in printed format.